common pink

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Dear Reader,

What do you expect from a “Letter from the editors”? Please raise your hands, imaginative audience, is anyone even reading them?

Not being sure if there were expectations for this first issue of Common Pink, we too weren’t sure whether to meet them and where. Lies disappointment on the other side of this question? Well if yes, we are here to disappoint you.

We admit, we were excited and impatient to get to work, so this letter does not stand in direct reference to the contributions on the following pages since it has been written before we received the material. We decided, we can’t free ourselves from not knowing but we can try to see it as a gift.

xx Common Pink

Expectational Complex

There is a recording of a play by Richard Foreman titled “Lava” from 1989 on YouTube, uploaded 11 years ago. In the description of the video they quote from a program note by Foreman himself saying that this new play might “at first seem even a bit more perplexing than the ‘unbalancing acts’ that are performed”, like, *don’t worry if you find this freaky*. I feel like this sort of thing could easily annoy me because it could sound pretentious, but for some reason it doesn’t put me off so much, I just think it’s funny.

I was brought to the video as follow up to reading a list by Foreman called “14 things I tell myself when I fall into the trap of making the writing imitate ‘Experience’”, making me think I want to have a look at this person’s art.

I was feeling a bit worried that I might like how a person was talking/writing about what they were doing more than what they were actually doing, but also unsure what I was so stressed by? Authenticity? Not liking something?

The play is structured by intervals of monologue from a bodiless voice filling

the space. The voice is deep, kind of like an old Winnie the Pooh, speaking in a chewy, melodic intensity. If this was a contemporary play they would have probably used an AI voice of a man in his 40-50s. "(…) You realize I don't have to be anything but a hole in space. That's my only responsibility. I have two choices, either I'm a mirror or a hole. If I'm a mirror I reflect back to people something they can name or recognize or think about or have an opinion about. I'm a mirror for their expectations which will arise out of what they already experienced. But if I bypass all their expectations, even the expectation of the unexpected then I'll avoid a hole in their experience, avoid and then only I'm something real instead of a mirror, get it? A hole is real, bottomless you could say. Which is the closest you can get to it. If it's bottomless it is real. If it's not, it's a mirror and it isn't anything at all, really, if it's a mirror. I rather be real for some stupid reason. I don't want to be a mirror, thank you. Good bye. Don't go yet. Say something. Why do I think that you are not going to say anything? Well. I should at least give you a chance, keep an open mind.(…)" The play continues, the voices last words of that scene are: "Once when I wore my boots my hair caught fire, wow, that was fun."[1]

Then the performers share experiences that were fun or not fun until the voice speaks again. Sometimes as highlights, or just moments, in the play someone is hitting a hi-hat or people slap their own face, which I find kind of goofy. I feel like recognizing these elements from movies or SNL where they make fun of performance art and theatre of this kind. It seems like there was originally a layer that is missing now and it can not be recreated. When I'm telling my friend about this notion, she says I shouldn't worry too much. For one, because I simply can't know and another, because it kind of reinforces an idea of there being a right or wrong perception of something. I think she's right.

The paranoid urge for definite meaning and to always put everything in a linear order. We are both wondering about the way we feel like we're all the time regulating our thoughts to appear like arguments and arguments to appear like erections when actually our way of thinking is permanently appearing entirely different, in circles, here and there, or more "little by little, the curtains separate, and little answers start to take shape" as Hélène Cixous put it.[2] Her works are being associated as part of the feminist philosophical stream from the 70s called "Écriture féminine" which connected various writers in their critique and rejection of male dominated ideas of rationality and reason. At the same time Cixous always refused to define anything as a "female" way of writing, saying that it is "impossible to *define* a female way of writing, and that it will continue in this impossibility, because you can't *theorize* or code it, which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist."[3] Expectations have often to do with that we expect certain rules to fall into place, certain patterns to continue. If this doesn't happen as expected we might feel confronted, agitated, confused, excited, inspired, happy, sad, scared, relieved, disappointed, …

1 Richard Foreman: *Lava*, 1989, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFrwqIA9dgE
2 Hélène Cixous: *The Novel Today*, In: Hélène Cixous, Susan Sellers (Ed.).: *White Ink. Interviews on sex, text and politics*, Acumen, Stocksfield 2008, p. 21
3 Hélène Cixous: *Das Lachen der Medusa*. In: Esther Hutfless a.o. (Publ.): *Hélène Cixous. Das Lachen der Medusa: Zusammen mit aktuellen Beiträgen.* Passagen Verlag, Vienna 2013, p. 47.

I want to see the end. I say bye, spend the whole day saying goodbye to everything. I have snacks. So we can eat while we watch. We watch together. But I also like to watch alone. When you get old, you see a lot. I have seen more. At the end, I will have seen the most. I want to draw the line. I want to see something grow old. I want to see the irreplaceable replaced by nothing. I talked to him. I rustle the bag. There are still some M&M's left. Yes, I talked to the one who made it, this world. He is ashamed. It was you. Yes. At the beginning, no, shortly after the beginning. When it was clear that everything had gone wrong. Yes, you said then, I take it all back. I am ashamed. Everything was wrong from the start. The setup was wrong. I want to undo. Today you ask: Yesterday there was me? Yes. Yesterday. But you were completely different yesterday. You forget everything, always. You always start again. You think everything is always new, but nothing has ever stopped. I keep everything. You keep forgetting everything. It was always like this. I rustle the bag. I crinkle the plastic wrap. If this were the last pack of all time, it would be different. That would be better. Do you keep the last M&M? No. Looking into a world without M&M's. And forever tasting the aftertaste of the last M&M. There is nothing left to say. I say this, but there is nothing left to say. Leave me. You always lead me away from myself. I also like watching alone. I want peace. Go get some bread. Tomorrow, we need something for breakfast. I want to see something pushed to its limits. I want to see something replaced. I want to see the end. All alone. I crinkle the plastic wrap. But the problem is: We always know we could buy a new pack anytime. Whenever. And you see: The sun is setting soon. It doesn't matter. It's fine. They tasted good. At some point everything comes to an end. They only ever get worse. Some people would just leave them there, forget the last pack, out of fear of bringing it to an end. Not me. Today, you ask: What is there to see? The sun is setting soon. But we've seen that before. We've been here. I want everything to finally find its end and I want to be there. So that

everything, in this way, at the very end, finds its end in me. It doesn't matter if it's just the end of this day or the end of something else. I have to be there. And you see: The sun is setting soon. I cannot leave. I am Omega. I have to keep my eyes open. If the package is still closed, the world is still in order. Of course, we know what's coming. We know M&M's. I won't die. Others can do that for me. All of that, others can do it for me. The others. Let them do everything. Like this. And you don't even know what you've told me already. You wouldn't believe it. You've told me all kinds of insanities. But you always forget everything. I want to see something reach its limit. It's not enough yet. Tomorrow, I have to see more. More of how it ends. More of that. At first, you only eat one M&M. Like this. Yes. And then two, and then more. I have snacks. I like watching alone. Also with you. But also alone. It's okay. That's how it is now. The snacks. You only think about the next one and the one after. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. And soon, REWE is closing. So go get some apples. And bread. At the beginning, no, shortly after the beginning. When it was clear that everything had gone wrong. That's when you said it: I take it all back. Sometimes, I take four at once. Then I slow down again. The M&M's are almost gone. But you always start again. You bring everything back. I like what doesn't come back. A true ending. No ghost stories. But one keeps eating. Out of pity, almost. Hauntings. At some point, it has to stop. I am full of M&M's. I crinkle the plastic wrap. Yes, you've forgotten everything I ever told you. That's how it always was. Everything you told me—I kept. But you've forgotten everything I told you. Yes. I rustle the bag. I crinkle the plastic wrap. Like this.

Annette Weisser
February 24th, 2025

We are waiting for Santa Claus.

But Santa isn't coming this year, instead comes: The bull in the china shop.

He swings its tail briefly and everything is in shambles.

"What did you expect," I say to myself.

I'm five years old and I'm sitting under the Christmas tree. Mother hastily sweeps'up the shards so that no one gets hurt.

I'm fifteen years old and I'm sitting in the upper branches of a pine tree. Below, expectation spreads in all directions, like porridge in a fairy tale.

"What did you expect," I say to myself. "Delicious porridge?" – "Well, yes," I whisper.

"You expect too much from life," says Mother. "You have to learn to compromise."

I say: "But not when it comes to taste!"

The bull laughs loudly and nibbles from the lower branches of the pine. The tree is wobbling alarmingly.

I'm thirty-five years old and Expectation fills the large beer mug in front of me. The bull sticks its snout in and takes a hearty sip.

"I didn't know you guys were expecting," someone says to the not yet famous writer and her husband, who are taking their newborn baby out for a stroll. The baby is nestled on her hip in a sling, almost invisible and very small. Shortly after, her first novel comes out.

In the evening I write in my diary: *We're all expecting all sorts of things. Besides, not every firstborn is going to redeem the world.*

Santa doesn't show up this year either.

I'm forty-five years old and I follow the now famous writer on Facebook.

"What did you expect," I say to myself. "The bull can't take care of everyone."

"That's exactly right," says the bull and takes another beer from the fridge.

On the way back to the sofa, he "acciden-

tally" steps on the toy train.
I'm fifty-five years old and today I take the car. Expectation stands at the side of the road and sticks its thumb out. "Who hitchhikes these days," I shout, "that's pathetic!" In the rear-view mirror I can see its disappointed face. That's when the bull hits the brakes. Expectation rushes in and makes itself comfortable in the back seat. Immediately the car smells of a wet dog. Then Expectation takes the famous writer's new novel out of its backpack.

"Great book," says Expectation.
"There are other professions, too," says Mother.
"It's too late for that now," I say. "I have to see it through."

Expectation doesn't know where to go, so I invite it to our home. I say: "One night only!" At dinner, the bull snatches the fried egg from Expectation's plate, breaking it. "Why is the bull allowed to have two eggs and I only one", my son whines. I give him my fried egg and hastily sweep up the shards so that no one gets hurt.

In the evening I write in my diary:
I make good use of both verb and noun:
With verb I disturb the schemes of the...
clown? With noun I hold evil at bay and
the fascists down.

The bull wants to know if I think he's a fascist. "Not everything is always about you," I say, offending the bull who deliberately steps on my reading glasses.

The next morning, Expectation sits expectantly at the breakfast table. I ask sternly: "What did we agree on last night?" To which Expectation explains that it really doesn't need much space and that it can turn into porridge or beer, if need be, as I know for sure. But the bull and the son want Expectation gone. I send it away and feel relieved.

In the evening I write in my diary:

I expect myself to look forward to spring with hope.
I expect myself to make my bed every day.
I expect myself to be a good mother to my son.
I don't expect anything good from the new federal government.

Aristoteles Nikolas Mochloulis

Antibiotic Story

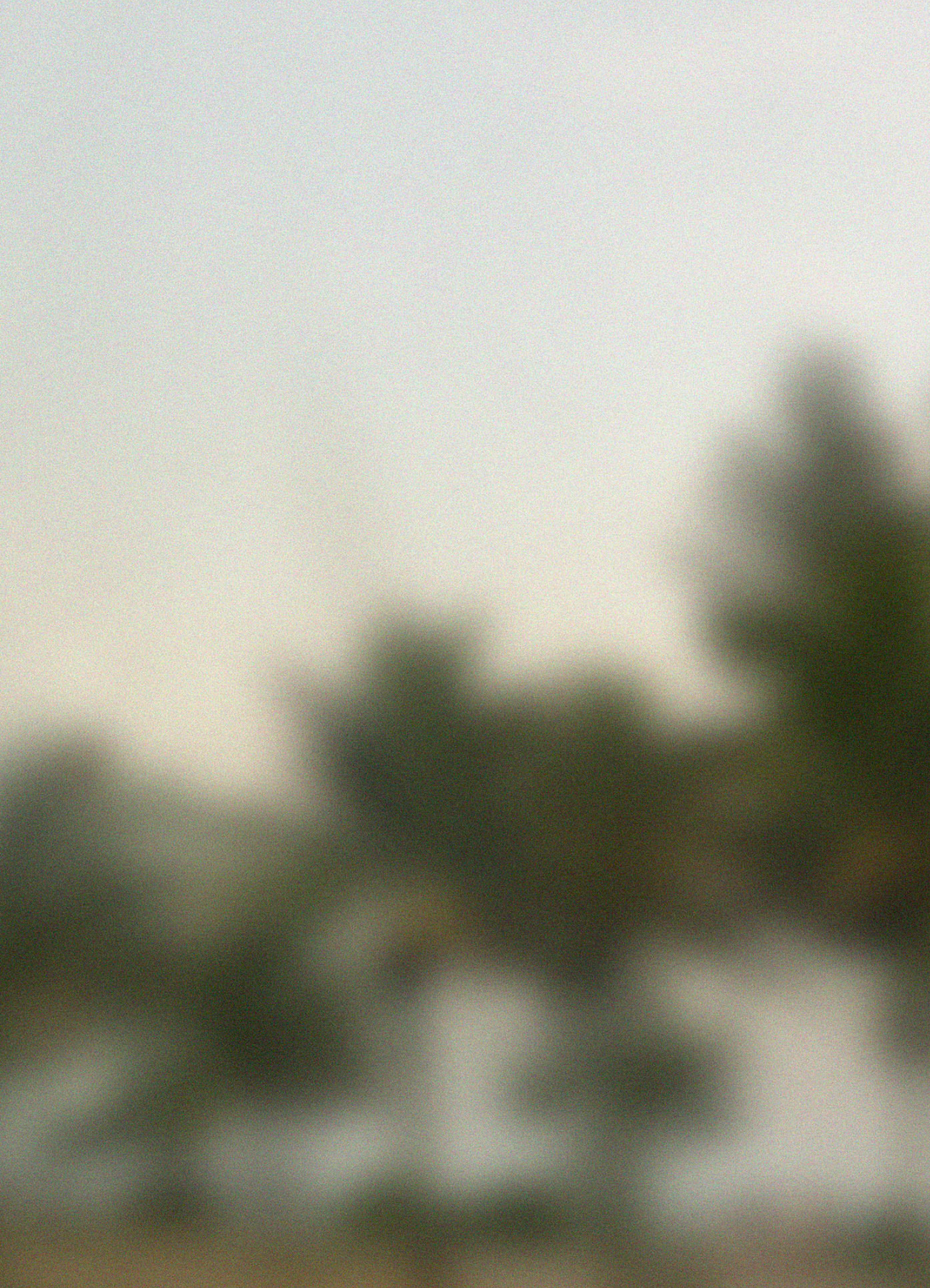
I'm twelve years old. My tonsils are white with puss and I'm on antibiotics. It's 9:20 am. I'm up, but not really. Getting up is a bore when I can be on the internet in my bed under my blankets playing 8-Ball with someone in Mexico on MiniClip. I'm sick, alone, and I'm happy. I'm dazed and barely there and I'm everywhere. I hit the 8-Ball in the corner hole on my second turn and lose the game. This makes me happy. I could do this every day, of every week, of every year, for twelve years maybe. Or more. Or even forever. No one can stop me. The only thing that could stop me would be this laptop breaking. Or if someone stole it, or smashed it. I'd smash them back with it and steal their money and buy a new one. I'm in my own world and I'm leaving this one. Mom knocks on my door and brings me out of it. I hate her. She's always saying I should stop wasting my time on the internet and go outside and play with the other kids. The only playing I wanna do is on MiniClip with strangers. She comes into my bedroom without my permission and clasps my laptop shut. Sweeps it to the side and sits down in its place. She says she's trying to help me but I don't want her help. She combs her fingers through my hair and parts my fringe in half. Drapes a wet white towel above my brows. Presses her hand onto it. It drips cool water into my eyes. I look up at her and she looks hazy through the water. I imagine her blurring out of existence. She's taking too much space on my bed and I want her out of here. The water is teasing my eyes so I press both fists into my cheeks and scrunch up my eyelids. Squeeze droplets out that run down my sweaty arms. It gives me goosebumps. I don't like goosebumps. I don't like feeling my body. Feeling her hand press into it. I try to shove her hand off my for head but she won't let go. She says she's run a cold bath for me and I should get up and lay in it. She says it'll make me feel better. "You've been stuck to that screen, sweating bullets for a week now." I wanna shoot bullets at her and fill her with holes.

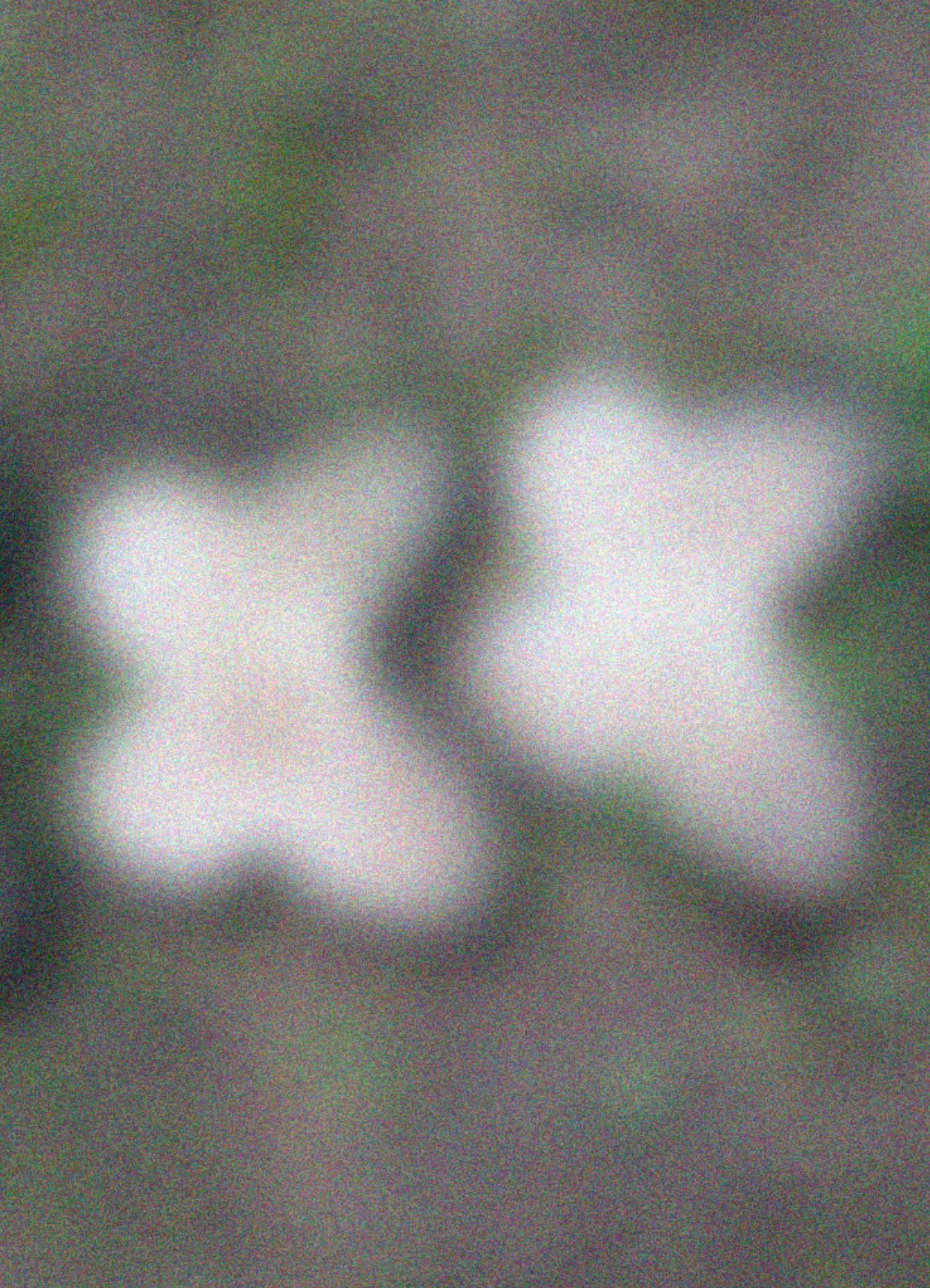
Keep shooting till all the holes connect with each other and she's one big hole. I don't wanna go anywhere she tells me to. My body feels warm and hollow. I'm scared the cold water will make me solid again. I try to tell her but it comes out dazed and quiet. I'm muttering. I'd rather be chatting to someone on MiniClip about how I've missed a whole week of school and will never go again. I wanna disappear. I think I'm almost there.

"You're not gonna get better if you keep burrowing yourself under your blankets."

I don't wanna get better. I'm on my way out of here. Losing at 8-Ball is all I want to do before I go. I've never won a game. I like it that way. I like losing. I like losing again and again and again and again and again. It's easy. All I have to do is get the 8-Ball in as fast as possible. I'm playing my own game and I'm the only one that knows. My MiniClip account records all the times I've played and lost. I've racked up 1,649 losses this far. Every loss is time stamped and dated. This will be my final record. I wanna lose at 8-Ball a million times sat here in bed while my body sweats itself into nothing. I'm moaning and Mom is trying to drag me out of bed and into the bath. She's pulling my arm and I can feel my shoulder almost pop-ping. I let out a broken scream that jolts here to attention. She lets go. Gives me a scornful look. I tell her to get in the bath herself if she thinks it's so good for you. I know what's good for me. No one else knows. She leaves the room looking angry. I lock the door, load MiniClip and run another game of 8-Ball.

Emika Lannelongue
avez-vous oublié votre mot de passe?





Deniz Kilicarslan

Skylark

Can you hear it too? she asks the kid in a bunny rider costume walking next to her. Its february and the bunny, a little too big for the owner, hangs loosely down his feet making no effort to ride away. She plugs in the headphones as people talk paradise shifts

Never ever have you ever seen whether the weather is changing

Say it one more time and my head will explode

Never ever have you ever seen whether the weather is changing

dsdlkfjjhurziosduhfksjfkhjsd,n

dlskfjlsdjfasslösdkjfl

dsfjisoeiurlkwjslowkj3o4duhjklskduhjf

wish that was code

dsdlkfjjh*urz*iosduhfksjfkhjsd,n

dlskfjlsdj*fass*lösdkjfl

dsfj*is*oeiurlkwj*slow*kj3o4jklskduhjf

lskjl*im*dkfjlsjk*sorry*lkjlkjlsdf

Putting on the headphones was a mistake

A mistake

Something explodes and small pieces
ignite
a fire

yyyyyyyy's spreading everywhere
e.g.

on stone
on brick
on fabric

y on paprika?
yyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy
yyyyyyyyyyy
yyyyyyyyy
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yyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy yyyyyyyy
yyyyyyyyyyyyyyy yyyyyyyyyyyyyyy
yyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy

Wind and water come together
bending feet of
prima ballerinas
(be) careful
back together

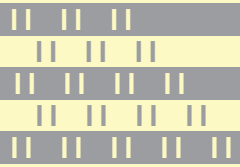
and

Marina is singing:
You can count on me to misbehave

A lark sings:
“O du schöne”
“O du ewige”

Then, slightly delayed…

Pizza, delivered by two men on top of a
high-structured building
supposedly a bank



Her gaze moves upward
some windows are empty
sometimes filled with one or two people

A group looks down at her, bankers,
normal *Otto Dinios* :-)
They gesture and wave
making an effort

Something drops down

A jaw, a charge, a battery

+-
+-
+-

She waves back

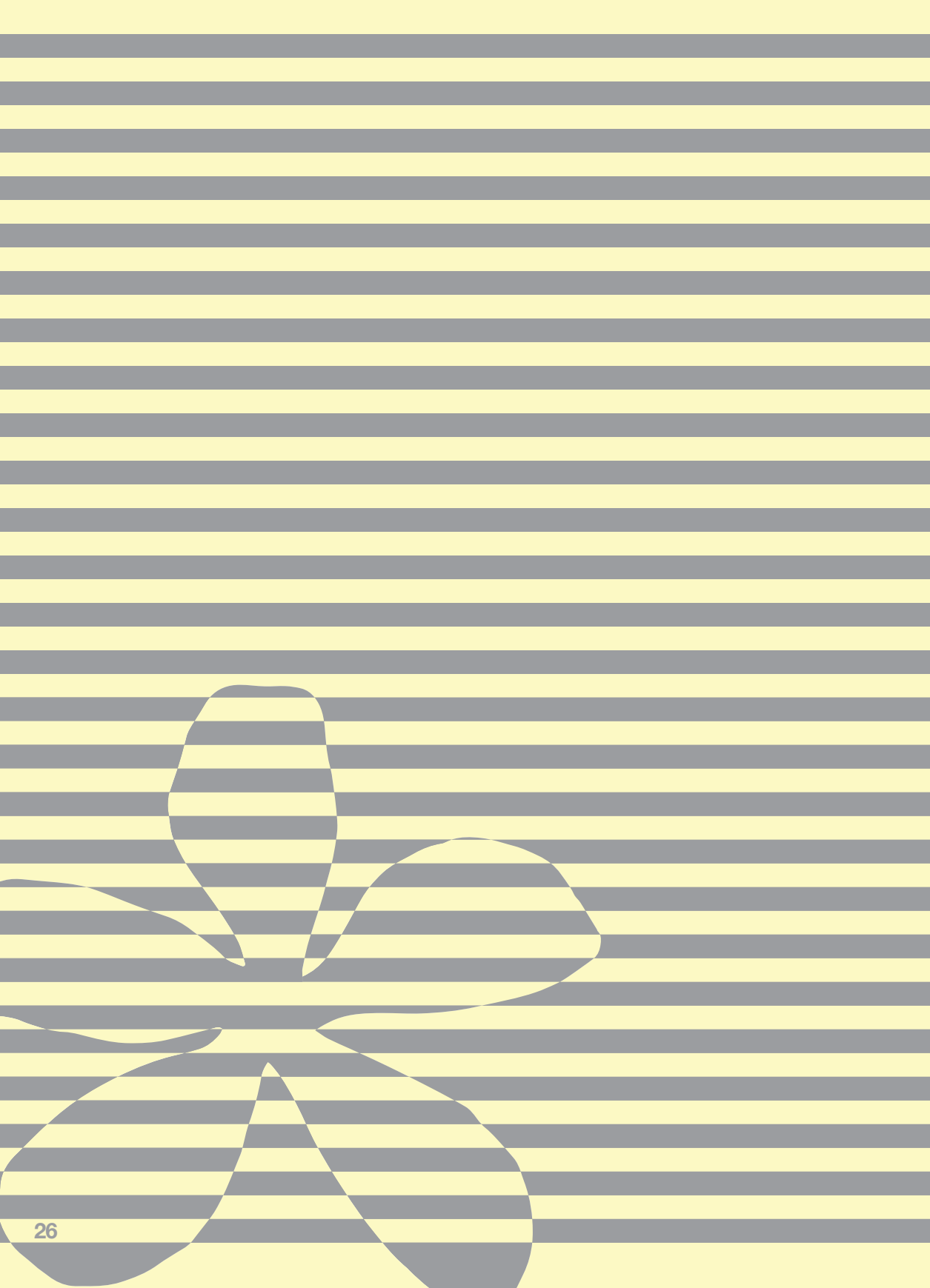
Some tears in the ground, barely moving.
People walk by, pressing them smoothly.

—----------
—----------

My studio is located in a building on the second and top floor.

The building surrounds a courtyard with a few car parking spots and some empty land. Most of it is rented out to a society called ‘der Steg’ [the jetty], which offers support in a variety of areas for people with psychological problems. There is also a café downstairs, which I think is connected to it, where the people who work here usually have lunch. In order to get to the studio, you have to walk past the jetty and up a spiral staircase. The stairway is designed with a variety of stained glass windows, some of which look handmade. These are regularly distributed themed windows on cities or neighbourhoods. I can’t identify any particular theme behind the selection. There are German and international medium-sized and large cities, e.g. New York, Worms and Seifhennersdorf, but also Charlottenburg. The borough in which the studio is located is not included. Each place is labelled with a coat of arms. The stairs first lead to a company called ‘Immobilien Service Deutschland’ [Real Estate Service Germany] and if you continue in the other direction, you reach the floor housing 21 studios. It is usually very quiet. Sometimes I meet a person in the kitchen, where there is a sink, two hobs, a microwave and a kettle. On occasion, a short polite conversation takes place—about food or the state of the rooms. If we meet in the corridor or in the toilet, we briefly greet each other.
I always go to the same toilet, the first one when you come in. Looking up from my seat, I can see ‘Fuck Jeff Bezos’, which has been commented on as ‘not nice’. Each time I sit there I see this and over time it gets weirder and weirder for me. I wonder who could have written this and who it’s meant to address? What kind of person then adds ‘not nice’ underneath it? I find this stupid and funny in itself. None of the artists who are currently renting a studio on the floor are people I’ve ever seen anywhere else and I’m almost certain that there are no other connections

between us. The only other place where I could imagine encountering someone from the studio floor would be in the parent group of our nursery, since sorts of people are gathered there. The first time we went there to have a look, the teacher told me that Martin Eder's child used to attend the nursery, which made me think for a moment. She added that she was a bit shocked herself when she saw the paintings. Nevertheless, it had been a great trip visiting him in his studio with the group of children. Martin Eder's income would (presumably) prevent him from being on my studio floor—the subsidisation of our rent is linked to a low income. Therefore one can assume that our art practice is not as economical. There are coloured finger-prints on the toilet door, around the handle area. The tap is difficult to turn off properly. Sometimes I don't pay attention and then you can hear the trickle of water flowing down the pipe from the corridor. It's remarkably loud. Once a year, the studio floor takes part in the borough's 'open studios' programme. I haven't yet participated, although I actually think it's good and right somehow, to do things like that. So far I haven't been able to make myself get involved socially or in any other way in the studio community. I don't even know if that's expected though. There is a small number of people who have been renting a studio here for over 10 years now. Since I moved in four years ago, maybe half of the studios have been rented to new tenants. There is a rule that was still in place at the time that you can only stay longer than nine years in cases of finan-cial hardship. Most of the rooms are quite small, don't have sinks and there is no lift. Carrying larger items down the spiral staircase is quite inconvenient. When doing this for the first time, I had the feeling that this could be a reason why so many of the rooms are occupied by paint-ers. There is an entire room next to the kitchen where some cleaning supplies are stored (with a note saying that apart from that it is not supposed to be used as a storage) and there are two sinks, one of which is evidently used for cleaning brushes. In the bathroom, there's a sign saying that "this sink" and not the one in the toilet should be used for this purpose. Anyway, I'm a bit ashamed that I've avoided this community so far since I'm afraid it has something to do with a kind of arrogance on my part—that I'm not interested in these people and never tried to engage on a deeper level. The fact that I've never seen them anywhere else could technically even speak in their favour and some of them I've never even met.



Common Pink #1
Expectational Complex

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